32d Congress, 1st Session. [HO. OF REPS.] Ex. Doc. No. 132.

MINT AT SAN FRANCISCO.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY,

IN REFERENCE TO

The Mint at San Francisco, and transmitting an estimate of expenses for one year.

August 31, 1852.—Laid upon the table, and ordered to be printed.

Treasury Department,
August 5, 1852.

Sir: As Congress has authorized the establishment of a mint at San Francisco, and it is presumed will make the needful appropriations for the buildings and machinery, the department begs leave to submit the accompanying estimates for the current expenses of the same for one year, and respectfully recommends that the needful appropriations should be made for the same during the present session.

The department would embrace the occasion to remark that, from the information and estimates which have been submitted to it, the proposed limitation of $300,000 for the cost of buildings and machinery will be entirely inadequate to procure them of a suitable character.

It has been suggested that the buildings and machinery now used as the assay office might be procured for the purpose, and, with certain additions, be sufficient for the whole business of refining and coining. The department is not in the possession of sufficient data to enable it to give a definite opinion on this point; but the natural inference is, that buildings put up for private purposes, and on a comparatively limited scale, would probably not possess the full requisite accommodations, nor be so substantially and properly built, nor have the suitable arrangements which would necessarily be required for a national establishment of the kind at that important point. Even to add to these buildings, if their location would admit of an extension, the above objections would, to a great extent, still continue to exist, and the establishment would always remain more or less incomplete, insecure, and badly arranged. It is probable they might be occupied temporarily, so that the business might be conducted on a restricted scale until a suitable structure could be erected for the purpose; but the department would earnestly but respectfully urge the plan of erecting a proper building expressly for the

purpose, and to procure new and suitable machinery for all the needful operations.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. L. HODGE,
Acting Secretary of the Treasury.

Hon. LINN BOYD,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Estimate of expenses of the mint at San Francisco for one year.

Salary of superintendent	$4,500
Salary of treasurer	4,500
Salary of the assayer	3,000
Salary of melter and refiner	3,000
Salary of the coiner	3,000
Salary of assistants and clerks	17,500
Labor	50,000
Acids	100,000
Contingencies	15,000

Under the difficulty of correctly estimating to what extent the owners of gold bullion will employ the services of the mint at San Francisco, or how far they may prefer to send their bullion for coinage to the Atlantic cities, it is of course impossible for the department to make correct estimates of the actual expenses, particularly for labor and acids—especially for the latter—which, if it cannot be manufactured there, will be very expensive if sent from the United States, in consequence of the great risk attending its transportation round Cape Horn, as it must be carried on deck; and, from the information possessed by the department, it appears, on an average, that less than one-fifth part of what is shipped safely arrives.